

Message Text

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ACTION OES-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 NSF-02 ERDA-07 TRSE-00 OMB-01

CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-02 USIA-15 PRS-01

SP-02 FEA-01 EB-07 AGR-10 /074 W

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R 231026Z APR 76

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0129

INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY ROME

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FOR OES/SCI AND DEPT PASS NSF, ERDA

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: TGEN, FR

SUBJECT: GOF SEVENTH 5-YEAR PLAN CALLS FOR, BUT NOT TOO
STRONGLY, RESUSCITATION OF FRENCH RESEARCH

REF: A) PARIS 06259, 11 MARCH 1975, B) PARIS 05393

1. UNDER HEADLINES SUCH AS "FRENCH RESEARCH IS SICK"
AND "SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH ANEMIC AND IN DEFICIENCY,"
THE PRESS OF 21 APRIL PRESENTED THE CONCLUSIONS OF
THE RESEARCH PORTION OF THE GOF'S SEVENTH 5-YEAR PLAN.
PREPARED IN FOUR MONTHS BY SEVERAL SUBCOMMITTEES UNDER
THE OVERALL DIRECTION OF JEAN-FRANCOIS DENISSE, FORMER
DIRECTOR OF CNES, THE FRENCH SPACE AGENCY, THE RESEARCH
PLAN FOCUSES ON THREE MAJOR AREAS: RESEARCHER
EMPLOYMENT, FINANCES, AND SPECIAL SUBJECT AREAS
REQUIRING PRIORITY ATTENTION.

A. THERE SHOULD BE A 6 PERCENT-PER-YEAR INCREASE
IN RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT FUNDS.

B. THERE SHOULD BE A 3 PERCENT ANNUAL INCREASE

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IN RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT PERSONNEL OVER THE NEXT

FIVE YEARS.

C. FIVE AREAS REQUIRE SPECIAL ATTENTION:

1. PROVISION OF ENERGY AND BASIC RAW MATERIALS.

2. ADAPTATION OF FRENCH AGRICULTURE AND INDUSTRY TO "THE NEW CONDITIONS OF INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION."

3. PROTECTION OF NATURE AND THE ENVIRONMENT.

4. IMPROVEMENT OF WORKING AND GENERAL LIVING CONDITIONS, PARTICULARLY IN TRANSPORTATION AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT.

5. INCREASED S & T COOPERATION WITH DEVELOPING COUNTRIES AND FRENCH OVERSEAS TERRITORIES AND DEPARTMENTS.

2. BEYOND THE MEDICAL ANALOGIES, THE PRESS COMMENTED THAT THE PLANNING COMMISSION'S CONCLUSIONS WERE EXACTLY PARALLEL TO THOSE WHICH WERE SET FORTH BY PRESIDENT GISCARD D'ESTAING'S COUNCILS ON RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT GUIDANCE, WHICH WERE HELD IN FEBRUARY AND NOVEMBER OF 1975 (SEE REFTEL A). THE DAILY LE FIGARO REMARKED THAT EVEN IF THE SEVENTH PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS WERE CLOSELY FOLLOWED, GOF-SUPPORTED RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT WOULD NOT REGAIN THE GROUND LOST DURING THE YEARS OF THE SIXTH 5-YEAR PLAN, 1970-75, WHEN A CONSIDERABLE DECLINE WAS COUNTENANCED.

3. COMMENTS.

A. AS INDIFFERENT AS THE SIXTH 5-YEAR PLAN WAS TO RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT, IT WAS EVEN POORLY AND INADEQUATELY FOLLOWED BY THE YEAR-TO-YEAR RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT BUDGETS.

B. THE 1976 RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT BUDGET, WHICH WAS PUT TOGETHER WITH AN EYE TOWARD THE SEVENTH 5-YEAR

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PLAN AND WELL AFTER THE HIGHLY PUBLICIZED PRESIDENTIAL COUNCILS ON RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT GUIDANCE, REFLECTS IN NO SUBSTANTIVE WAY THE PLAN'S PIOUS HOPES FOR 1976-80 (REFTEL B).

C. THERE IS NO INDICATION THAT THE PRESENT ADMINISTRATION DISLIKES 5-YEAR PLANS ANY LESS THAN THE PREVIOUS ONE. SPECIFIC PROGRAMS AND SPENDING TARGETS ARE TOO USEFUL AS AMMUNITION FOR OPPOSING POLITICAL PARTIES AND THUS ARE AVOIDED. WE EXPECT, THEREFORE, THAT ONLY THE BROADEST OF GENERAL OUTLINES WILL BE PROPOSED AND THAT FIVE YEARS FROM NOW IT WILL BE QUITE DIFFICULT TO QUANTITATIVELY ASSESS HOW WELL ANY PART OF THE PLAN WAS FOLLOWED.

D. WHAT CONTINUES TO BE CLEAR IS THAT GOF RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT GROUPS WILL RECEIVE ONLY MINIMUM SUPPORT, AS REQUIRED BY SALARY AND SOCIAL LEGISLATION, EXCEPT FOR THOSE ELEMENTS PRODUCING IN AREAS OF FUNDAMENTAL AND CLEAR IMPORTANCE TO THE NEAR-TERM NEEDS OF THE COUNTRY--AS THESE NEEDS ARE PERCEIVED BY A SMALL AND INBRED RIGHT-OF-CENTER RULING

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MERITOCRACY.

4. A SOCIALIST PARTY SPOKESMAN FOR SCIENCE POLICY MAKES THE GENERAL CRITICISM THAT THE PLAN WAS PUT TOGETHER BY THE PROCESS OF ARBITRATION AMONG VARIOUS PRESSURE GROUPS, NONE OF WHICH REALLY REPRESENTED THE LONG-TERM INTERESTS OF THE WHOLE HUMAN COMMUNITY OF FRANCE. WHEN MORE THAN THE SUMMARY OF THE PLAN IS MADE PUBLIC--THE FULL DOCUMENT IS CURRENTLY AT THE PRINTERS--WE CAN EXPECT MORE DETAILED COMMENTARY AND ANALYSIS FROM BOTH THE LEFT AND THE RIGHT. AT THAT TIME WE WILL REPORT IN MORE DETAIL ON HOW GOVERNMENT AND OPPOSITION LEADERS PER-

CEIVE AND INTEND TO COPE WITH FRANCE'S SCIENCE AND
TECHNOLOGY PROBLEMS OVER THE NEXT FIVE YEARS.
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